DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 451 830 JC 010 257

TITLE	Cuesta College School Performance Results.
INSTITUTION	Cuesta Coll., San Luis Obispo, CA.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	13p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.cuesta.cc.ca.us/deptinfo/instserv/perform.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Outcomes Assessment; Community Colleges; Educational Finance; Enrollment Management; *Institutional Characteristics; *Institutional Evaluation; Participant Satisfaction; *Program Effectiveness; School Surveys; Student Financial Aid; Student Surveys; *Transfer Rates (College); Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	*Cuesta College CA

ABSTRACT

This Cuesta College (California) document identifies key institutional effectiveness indicators that are used to assess institutional performance on specified educational processes. The key process of instruction/learning is measured through student performance results such as: (1) transfer rate (University of California/California State University); (2) degrees and certificates granted; (3) successful course completion; (4) workforce development data; (5) contract training data; (6) student assessment data; (7) early alert data; and (8) student drop survey. The key processes of student and stakeholder satisfaction are measured using: (1) Noel Levitz student satisfaction survey; (2) withdrawal survey; and (3) the Early Alert Survey. Faculty and staff attitudes and needs are measured by reference to: (1) faculty and staff satisfaction survey; and (2) faculty and staff development survey. Enrollment management and fiscal stability are measured by: (1) enrollment indicators; (2) WSCH vs. Cap Limit; (3) WSCH/FTEF; (4) financial aid default rate; and (5) accident reports and worker compensation claims. Other institutional indicators include: (1) reserve ending balance; (2) full-time to part-time faculty ratio; (3) foundation giving; and (4) student financial aid participation and default rate. Text accompanying 20 figures compares Cuesta performance over time with Cuesta goals. (PGS)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 451 830

School Performance Results

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

F. Martinez

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

TC010257

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

7.0 School Performance Results

Cuesta College tracks a set of institutional effectiveness indicators and comparative data that is linked to Cuesta's key college processes as identified in Figure 7.0. Note that the figure is subdivided into the effectiveness indicators that pertain to each of the following sub-sections.

Generally speaking, these effectiveness indicators monitor ongoing educational processes, and project future ("stretch") goals. Over time, they will plot the discrepancy between the two. The goals themselves are either self-developed or developed from statewide Partnership for Excellence outcomes. The Partnership for Excellence program commits all California community colleges to achieving multi-dimensional quantifiable outcomes by the year 2005. Partnership for Excellence quantitative information is provided by the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

In addition to collecting its own data, Cuesta College has engaged outside consultants and national research firms to provide additional assistance, especially in the areas of student satisfaction and needs assessment.

7.1 Student Performance Results

Institutional Effectiveness: Student Transfer and Preparation for Transfer

One of the three major missions of California community colleges is to prepare students for transfer to UC, CSU, or private four-year post-secondary institutions. While Cuesta does not transfer the greatest number of students (due to its relatively small size), compared with all other California community colleges, it does transfer the greatest percentage of its enrollment to either California State University or University of California campuses.

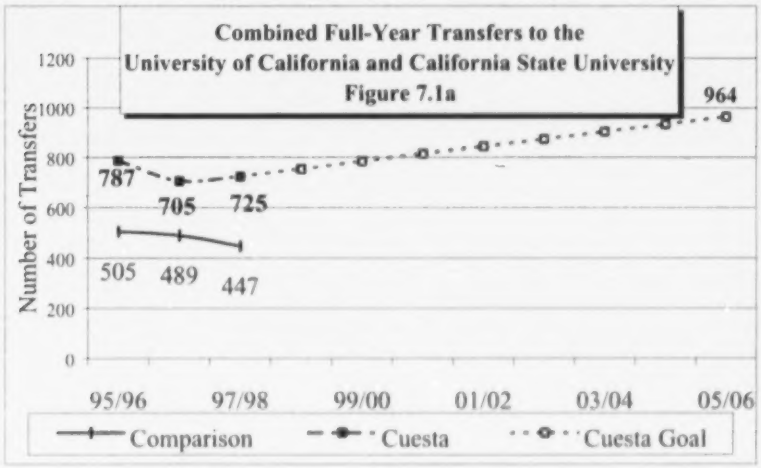
Figure 7.1a shows the number of s[illegible]s transferred to either the CSU or the UC system for the last three years (1995/1996—1997/1998). The figure shows a projected goal of 964 student transfers per year by 2005/2006. The goal of transferring a total of 964 students was developed by adapting the statewide Partnership for Excellence goal to Cuesta's student population.

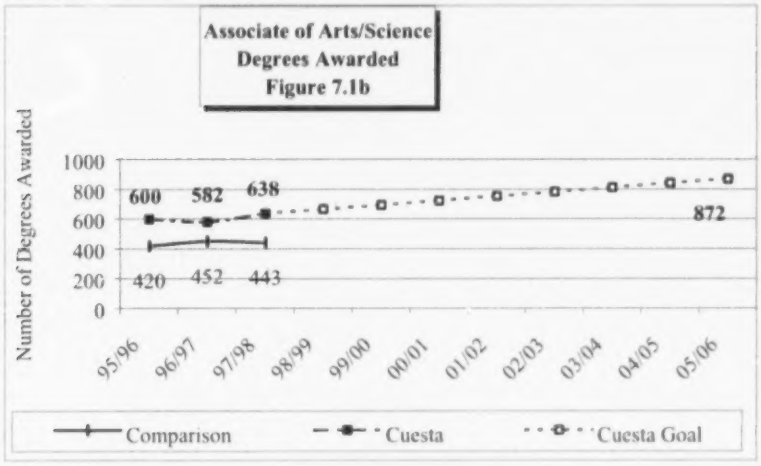
For comparison purposes (for this and all future appropriate performance indicators) a sub-set of similar community

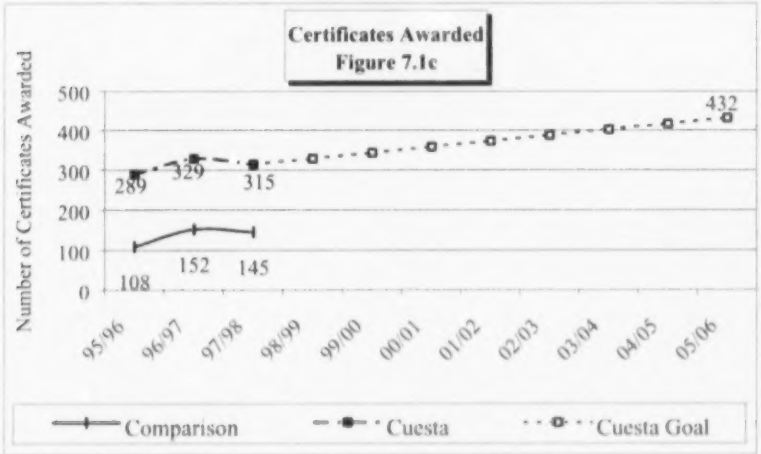
Key Institutional Effectiveness Indicators
Figure 7.0

Key Processes	Institutional Effectiveness Indicators	Stretch Goals
Instruction/Learning (7.1)	• Transfer Rate (UC/CSU) • Degrees and Certificates Granted • Successful Course Completion • Workforce Development Data • Contract Training Data • Basic Skills Improvement Data • Student Assessment Data • Early Alert Data • Student Drop Survey	• To meet or exceed the goals established by the systemwide (106 colleges) Partnership for Excellence project in the areas of transfer, certificates and degrees, successful course completion, workforce development and basic skills improvement.
Student and Stakeholder Satisfaction (7.2)	• Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey • Withdrawal Survey • Early Alert Survey	• To meet or exceed the national norm on the satisfaction survey.
Faculty and Staff Results (7.3)	• Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Survey • Faculty and Staff Development Survey •	• To increase satisfaction by 2% annually.
Enrollment Management and Fiscal Stability (7.4)	• Enrollment Indicators • WSCH vs. Cap Limit • WSCH/FTEF • Reserve Balance • Financial Aid Default Rate • Accident Reports and Worker • Compensation Claims	• To maintain a 2% over cap enrollment pattern. • To maintain a 525 WSCH/FTEF ratio. • To maintain a 6% reserve. • To maintain a financial aid default rate of less than 20%. • To maintain or reduce the current level of claims.

colleges was selected as a comparison group against which to judge Cuesta's performance. These colleges are relatively similar in size, socio-economic configuration and in some cases are geographically located near a large CSU or UC campus just as Cuesta College is. The comparison group is composed of six community colleges—College of the Desert, Fremont-Newark, Marin, Mira Costa, Monterey Peninsula and Santa Barbara City College. Figure 7.1a shows the average number of student transfers for the six-college comparison group for the last three years.





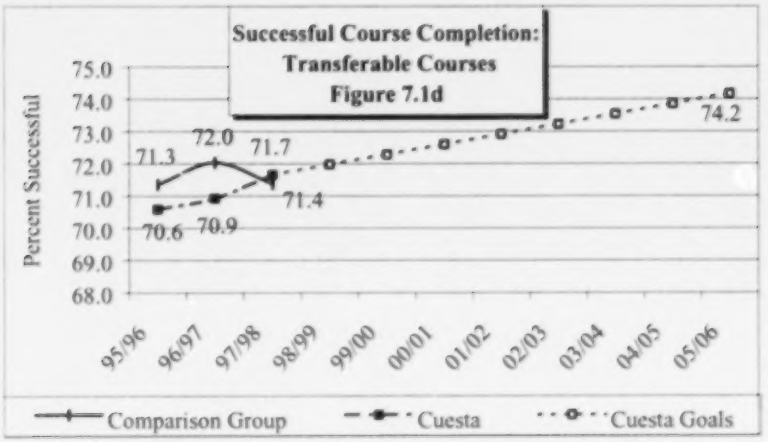


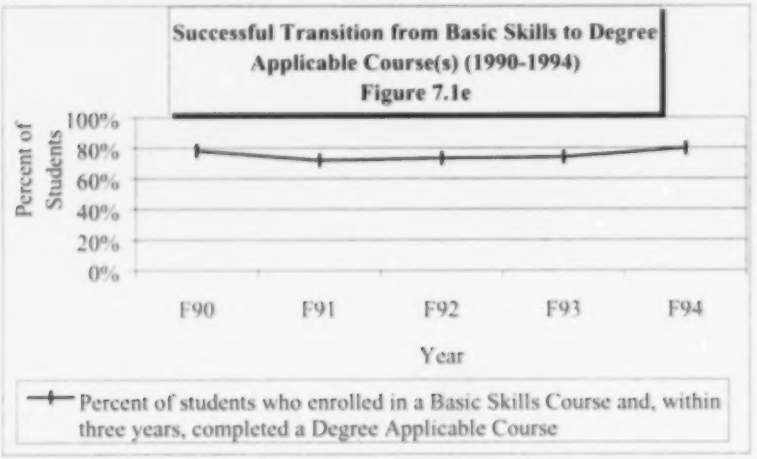
Another primary student goal is the attainment of an AA/AS degree and/or certificate. Figures 7.1b and c show similar information for the number of AA/AS degrees awarded and the number of certificates awarded. In every case, Cuesta College performs significantly above the comparison group. Realistic eight-year goals have been developed for future comparison purposes.

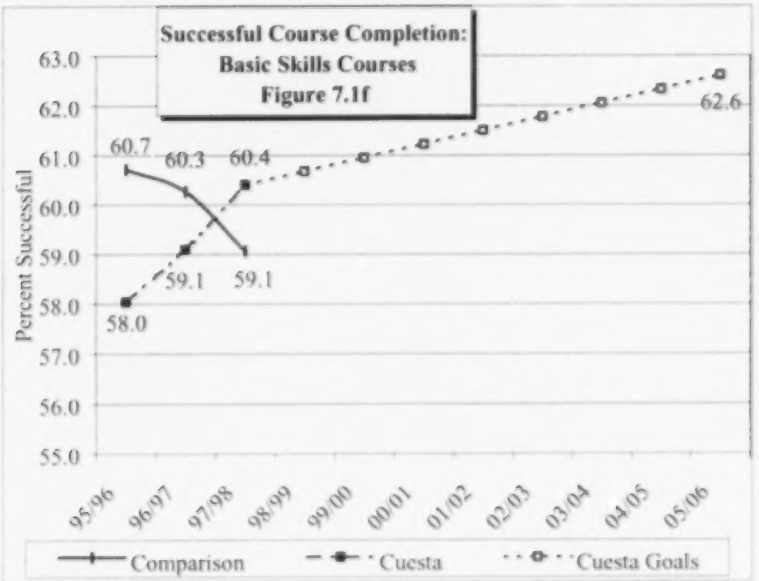
It is important to monitor internal performance indicators as well as output performance indicators. Figure 7.1d shows the percentage of students who have completed transferable courses during the last three years. While starting below the comparison group in 1995/1996, Cuesta exceeded this group in 1997/1998 and has an eight-year goal of attaining a 74.2% successful course completion rate by 2005/2006.In order to successfully complete college-level courses, many Cuesta students must complete basic skills (high school level) courses while at Cuesta. Figure 7.1e shows the percentage of students who successfully transitioned from basic skills courses to degree-applicable courses over the last five ycars. The percentage is relatively stable at just less than 80%.

In order to transition from basic skills (high school level courses taught at Cuesta) to degree-applicable courses, significant numbers of students enroll and must succeed in basic skills courses and must succeed in those courses. Figure 7.1f shows the success rate for the previous three years and projects an eight-year course completion goal (62.6% during 2005/2006). The comparison group is currently experiencing significant problems in this area.

Cuesta College has monitored and tracked the academic skills of its incoming freshmen for over a decade. While there has been some yearly fluctuation, generally speaking, only 15-20% of new students are ready to take courses in English and mathematics which can be transferred to four-year post-secondary institutions. Fully 33-37% of incoming freshmen are not even ready for non-transferable college courses and must take basic skills (high school) courses in English and mathematics. With these baseline entry-







level figures in mind, Cuesta's success at preparation of transfer students is all the more remarkable.

Institutional Effectiveness: Vocational Education/Workforce Development

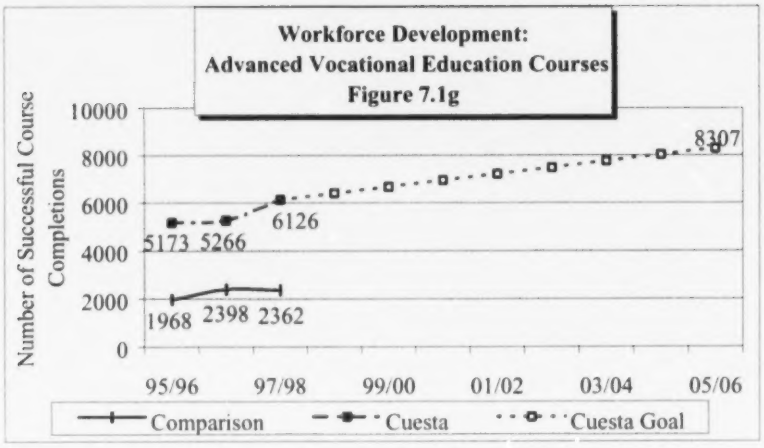
A second major mission of the California Community Colleges is vocational education. Cuesta College provides vocational courses and programs that prepare students to enter the workforce, upgrade their skills, and retool entirely as their workplace changes. Figure 7.1g shows the number of students who completed advanced vocational courses. Cuesta College's performance is significantly above that of the average number of students in the comparison group.

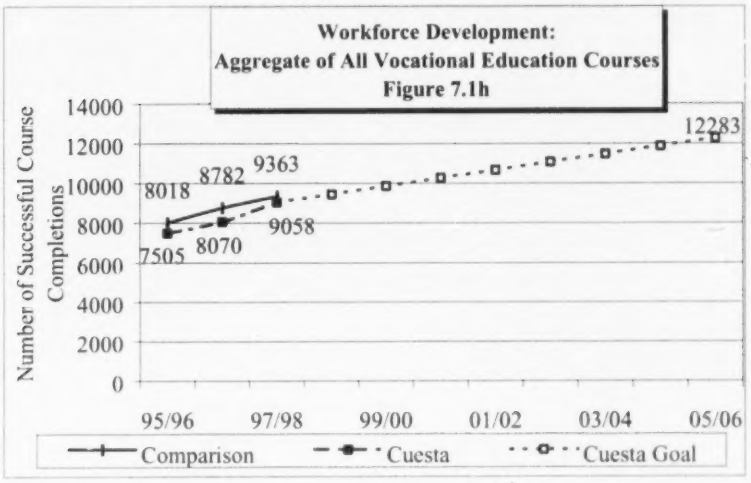
Figure 7.1h shows the aggregated information for all vocational educational courses. In both instances, Cuesta College is either significantly above its comparison group (Figure 7.1g) or operating just above its comparison group (Figure 7.1h).

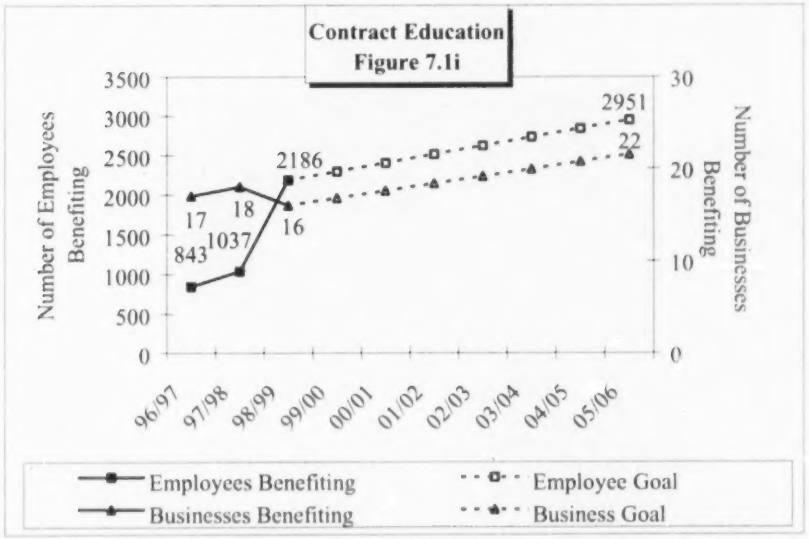
Institutional Effectiveness: Continuous Workforce Improvement

The third mission of California Community Colleges is economic development. One way of achieving this component is through contract, fee-based education, such as providing training to local businesses for their employees—either at their workplace or using the college's facilities.

The numbers of employees benefiting from contract education are shown in Figure 7.1i. Note that the number of employees benefiting is depicted on the left-hand scale, while the number of businesses benefiting is shown on the right-hand scale. Because no comparable information is available from the comparison group, its data cannot be presented. However, Cuesta has established multi-year goals for both the number of employees and the number of businesses served.


Workforce Development:
Advanced Vocational Education Courses
Figure 7.1g
Number of Successful Course Completions
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
8307
6126
5173 5266
1968 2398 2362
95/96
97/98
99/00
01/02
03/04
05/06
Comparison
Cuesta
Cuesta Goal


Workforce Development:
Aggregate of All Vocational Education Courses
Figure 7.1h
Number of Successful Course Completions
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
12283
9363
8018 8782
9058
7505 8070
95/96
97/98
99/00
01/02
03/04
05/06
Comparison
Cuesta
Cuesta Goal


Contract Education
Figure 7.1i
Number of Employees Benefiting
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
Number of Businesses Benefiting
30
20
10
0
2951
22
2186
17 18
16
843 1037
96/97
97/98
98/99
99/00
00/01
01/02
02/03
03/04
04/05
05/06
Employees Benefiting
Businesses Benefiting
Employee Goal
Business Goal

7.2 Student and Stakeholder Satisfaction Results

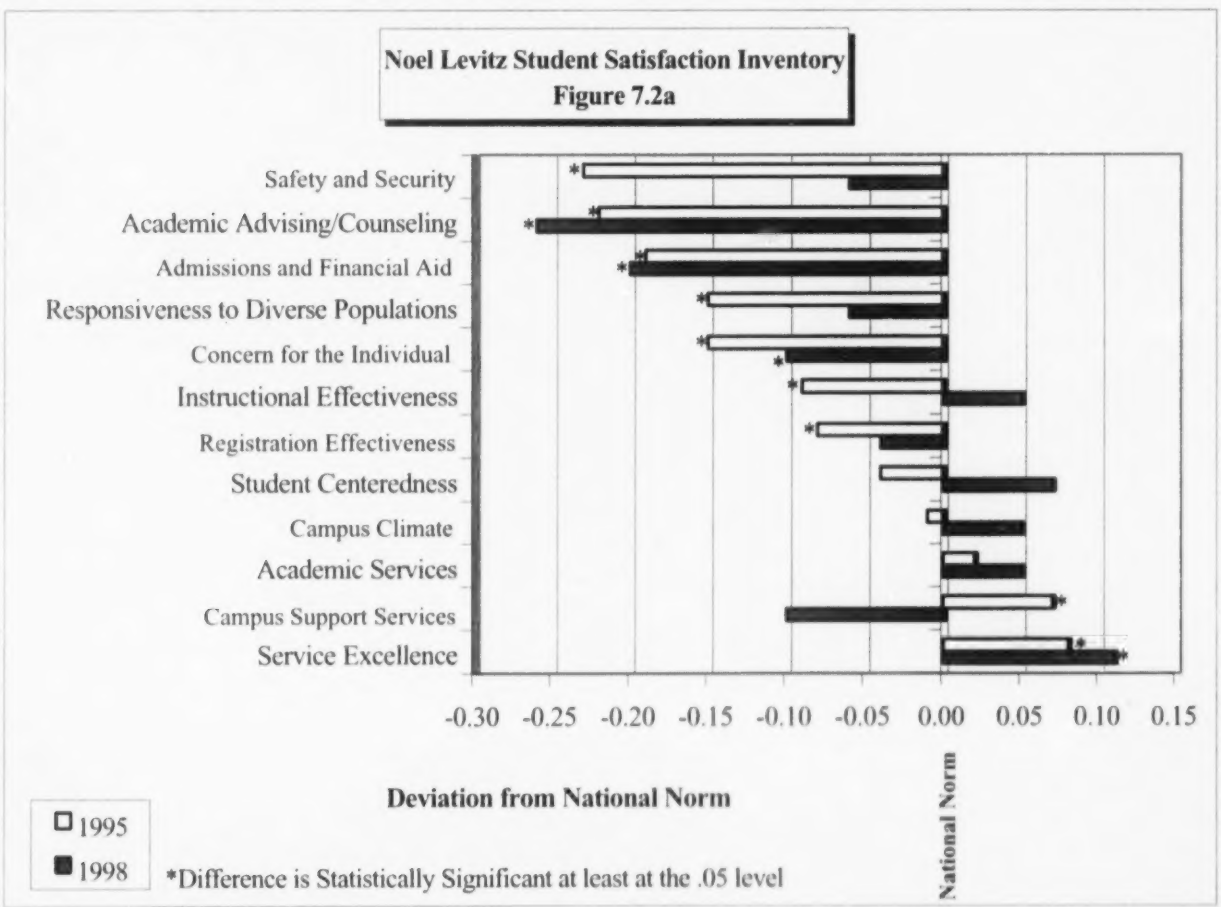
Cuesta College contracted with the USA Group Noel-Levitz, Inc. in Iowa City, Iowa in 1995 and again in 1998 to assist in conducting a Student Satisfaction Inventory. Noel-Levitz has developed a national norming population for similar post-secondary institutions which allows Cuesta to monitor student satisfaction in 12 areas over time and compare these results to a corresponding national norm. The Student Satisfaction Inventory uses principles of consumer theory in its construction. Students are viewed as consumers who have choices about investing in post-secondary education. Students are expected to have opinions about the institution they have chosen to attend.

Figure 7.2a shows the 12 areas surveyed on the left-hand side of the figure. The corresponding national norm is shown as a vertical line two-thirds of the way from the left-hand axis. Student satisfaction (from a seven-unit Likert Scale) is shown as deviations from the national norm. For example, the first area surveyed was students' perception of their level of satisfaction with "safety and security" on the Cuesta campus. Figure 7.2a shows that in 1998, the average satisfaction level was .06 units below the national norm—a small and not statistically significant difference. However, Figure 7.2a also shows that in 1995, the average satisfaction level was 0.23 units below the national norm. Statistics tell us that such a deviation from the norm could have occurred by chance only once in 1,000 samplings.

Thus it can be seen that while there was a very large improvement in this area (due to considerable effort on the college's part) between 1995 and 1998, in the minds of students, the average satisfaction level is still 0.06 units below the norm. The Public Safety office is currently studying the survey results with an eye to further improvement. The remainder of this figure is interpreted similarly.

Generally speaking, student satisfaction in most of the 12 areas sampled (9 of 12) is improving over time. Cuesta has assembled appropriate Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) teams to do further research into the unimproved areas.

A second indication of student and stakeholder satisfaction, or lack thereof, is student course withdrawal statistics. The challenge of measuring such an indicator is determining why a student chooses to withdraw.
One of the major problems with course withdrawal surveys is that students are apt to tell you what they think you want to hear so that they are allowed to withdraw. To circumvent this problem, the dean of student services at Cuesta College designed a withdrawal survey form that asked the student (who was about to withdraw) a series of questions about what the college could have done differently to prevent



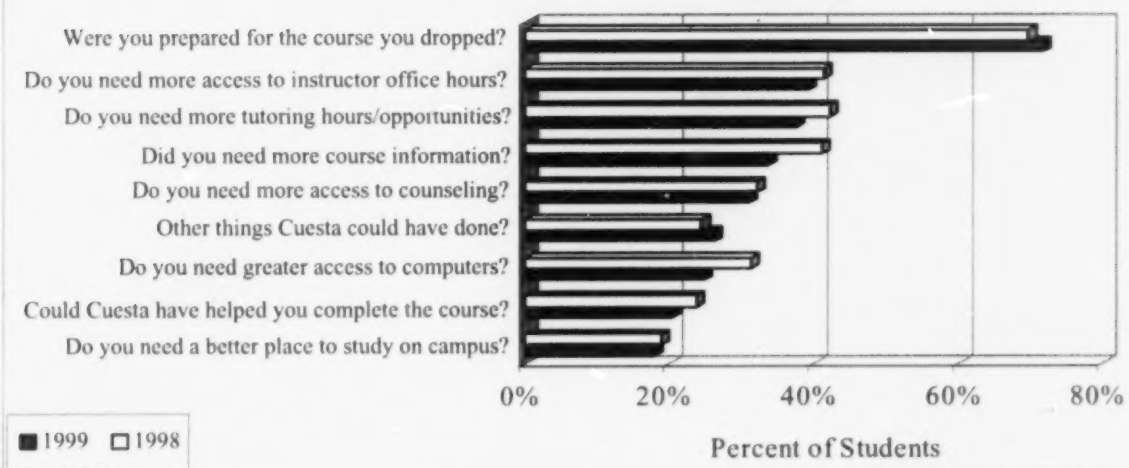
course withdrawal. The resulting survey has been conducted for the past two years. The results of these surveys are shown in Figure 7.2b. Note that the results of the series of questions are presented in descending order of the percentage of "yes" responses. For example, the first question asked if the student had felt that he/she was prepared for the course being dropped. Over 70% (in 1999) and nearly 70% (in 1998) said "Yes" - indicating that their overriding reason for withdrawal was not lack of preparation. Similarly, the second question queried the student about more access to the instructor through his/her office hours. Just fewer than 40% (in 1999) and just over 40% (in 1998) felt that more instructor office hours would have helped. The remainder of the figure is interpreted in a similar manner. Generally speaking, the responses for student course withdrawal are numerous and varied. Many legitimate reasons are not within the purview of the college o control. Two observations seem in order:

1) On 7 of 9 questions asked, the percentage of "yes" responses is lower for 1999 than for 1998 indicating that the amount of college responsibility for a student's course withdrawal may be decreasing;

2) Between 20% and 40% of the students who withdrew felt that their individual reasons for course withdrawal directly involve variables over which the college has control.

A third indicator of student and stakeholder satisfaction, albeit an indirect one, is Cuesta's Early Alert program. This process notifies a student, after six weeks of instruction, that, in the opinion of the instructor, the student is in danger of failing a course by the end of the semester. Cuesta has used this process for the last six years. Generally speaking, about 25% of all students receive a notification of possible failure (an Early Alert letter).

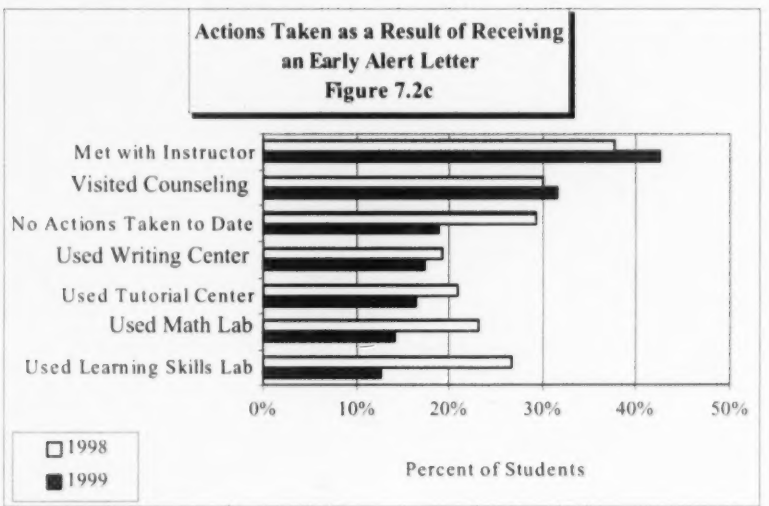
Student Withdrawal Survey Results
("Yes" responses to the following questions)
Figure 7.2b

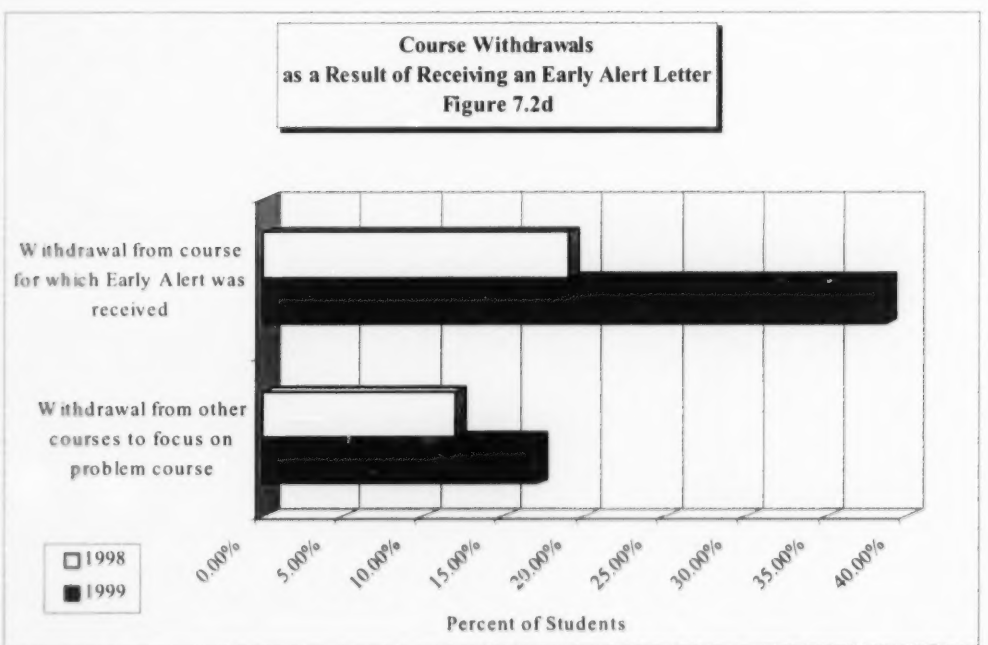

Were you prepared for the course you dropped?
Do you need more access to instructor office hours?
Do you need more tutoring hours/opportunities?
Did you need more course information?
Do you need more access to counseling?
Other things Cuesta could have done?
Do you need greater access to computers?
Could Cuesta have helped you complete the course?
Do you need a better place to study on campus?
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
1999
1998
Percent of Students

A question that has often been asked is, "Does receiving an Early Alert letter influence students to alter their behavior so as to improve their chances of success in each of their courses of enrollment?" Figures 7.2.c and 7.2.d show the results of a student survey, conducted during 1998 and again in 1999, to determine if receipt of an Early Alert letter alters student behavior.

In 1999, the percentage of students meeting with their instructor increased by approximately 5%– from 37 to 42%. There was also an increase in the percentage of students who visited a counselor, and there was a reduction of about 10% of students who took "no action" as a result of receipt of an Early Alert letter. Figure 7.2.c also shows reduced usage of available assistance centers/labs on campus when compared to 1998. Figure 7.2.d shows a large increase in course withdrawal – nearly double – as a result of receipt of an Early Alert letter.

In summary, it appears that the Early Alert program does alter student behavior between the sixth week of instruction and the final withdrawal date (twelfth week of a 17-week semester).



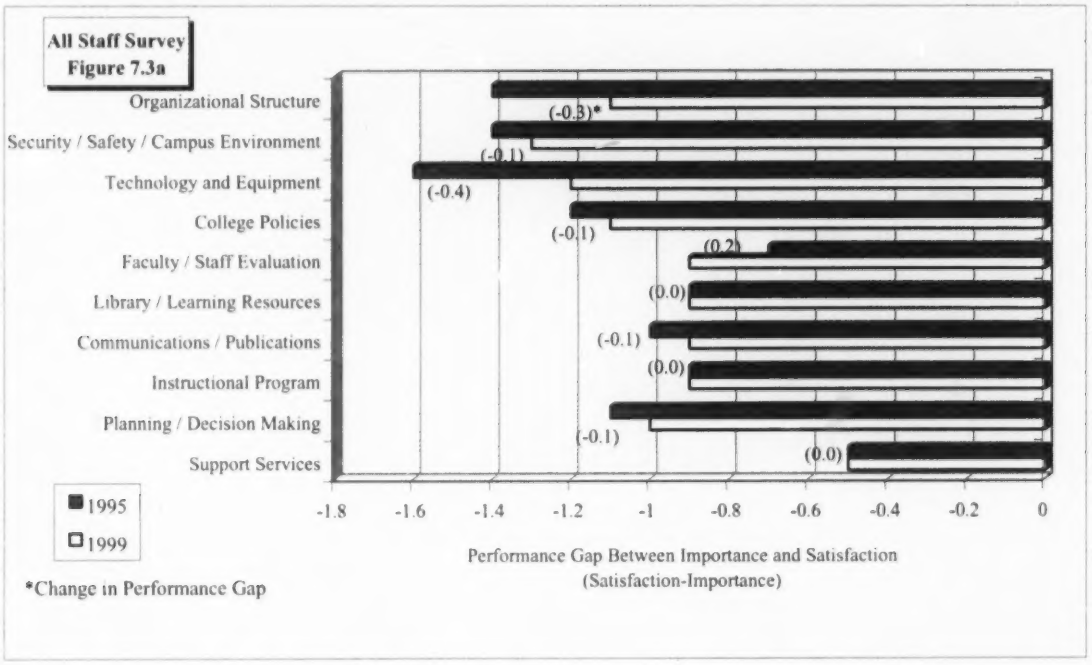


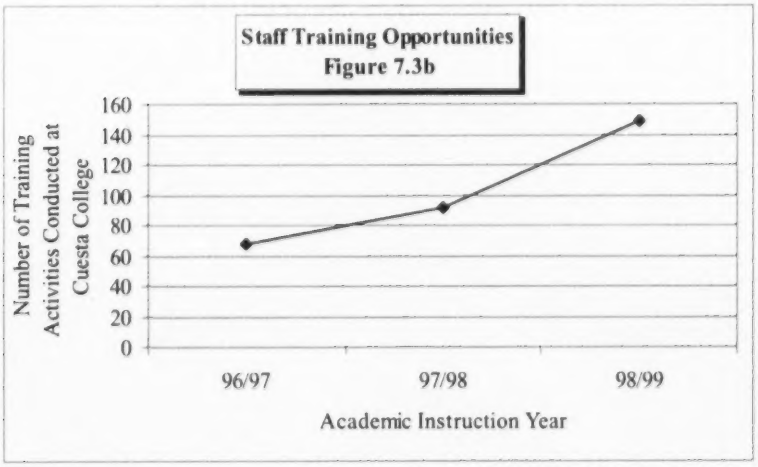
7.3 Faculty and Staff Results

In order to motivate employees, it is necessary to periodically monitor attitudes and feelings of staff. This information is then used to
design intervention mechanisms to deal with areas of concern that have been pinpointed during the monitoring.

Cuesta College formally monitors employee satisfaction with surveys of its permanent staff (currently 621 employees) every three years. This set of survey instruments measures ten areas of staff satisfaction. These areas are shown on the left-hand side of Figure 7.3a. This figure has been arranged according to the latest results (March 1999) in descending order. Thus, the first area, "organizational structure," contains a 1999 bar (open) and a 1995 bar (solid). The length of each bar depicts the amount of discrepancy between staff perceptions of the "importance" of this dimension versus perceived level of "satisfaction" with this dimension. This difference between "importance" and "satisfaction" is called the "performance gap." In 1995, the performance gap was -1.4 units. However, in 1999, the gap had diminished to less than -1.2 units. The resulting reduction in gap is -0.3 units. In other words, staff perceived an improvement in the college's organizational structure between 1995 and 1999. Management made numerous changes in the governance structure of the college during the intervening three-year period.

Of the ten areas measured, six areas show improvement: organizational structure; security and safety; technology and equipment; college policies; communications and publications; and planning and decision making. Figure 7.3a also shows status quo in three areas: library learning resources; support services; and instructional program.





Only the faculty and staff evaluation process shows deterioration. The evaluation processes for faculty and staff are negotiable. While considerable resources have been devoted to improving the evaluation system through collective bargaining, survey results indicate that more must be accomplished. The primary complaint relates to the work load associated with the 360 degree evaluation process.

A second measure of faculty and staff satisfaction involves the extent of training opportunities available to employees—both faculty and support staff. Figure 7.3b shows a simple frequency plot of the number of training opportunities available to Cuesta employees during the last three years.

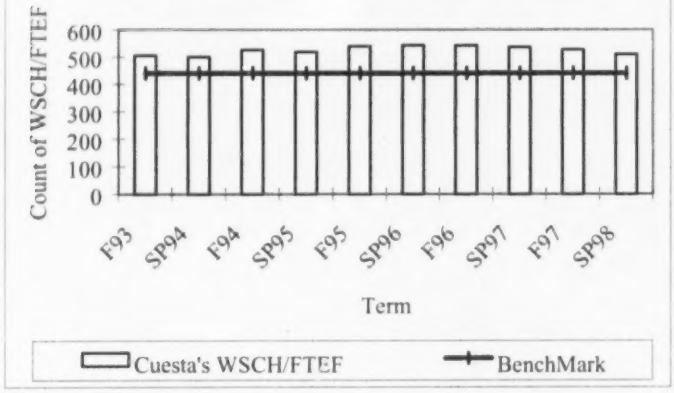
Training opportunities are designed and made available to employees on the basis of a staff development needs assessment conducted yearly. The coordinator of staff development designs and conducts this needs assessment. On the basis of employee responses, the coordinator designs the coming year's training program.

7.4 School-Specific Results

WSCH/FTEF

Cuesta College continues to maintain a WSCH/FTEF ratio that exceeds the target established through collective bargaining agreements and benchmarks. The slight decrease in this ratio in the 1998-99 academic year was due to planned changes in the faculty collective bargaining agreement and the opening of the North County Campus. (see Figure 7.4a-1).

WSCH/FTEF Ratios (1993-1998)
Figure 7.4a-1

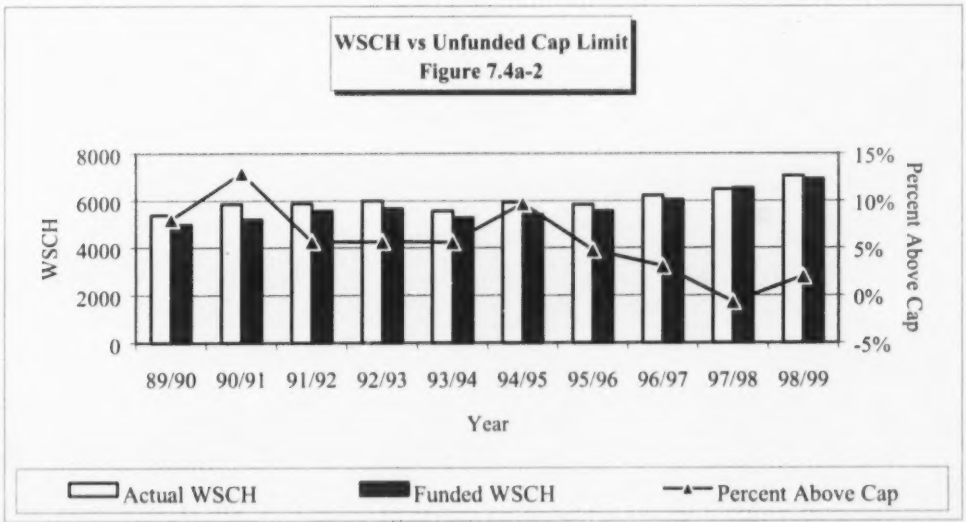


WSCH versus Unfunded Cap Limit

Figure 7.4a-2 shows that the district's principal source of income is derived from a "Revenue Limit Formula" that is based on student workload defined as FTES. Each year, as part of the revenue limit, districts receive a factor for growth over and above the prior year funded cap. The college sets an annual target for growth that exceeds funded cap by 2% the following reasons:

- The cushion provided by the over-cap FTES protects the district, at least for one fiscal year, from decreases in student demand.
- Maintaining additional FTES protects the district from losses in FTES that could occur from unfavorable enrollment audits.
- The cushion also reduces the cost of meeting growth requirements in subsequent years.
- By maintaining more FTES than it is funded for, the district is eligible for additional funding as part of the Revenue Limit recalculation process.

WSCH vs Unfunded Cap Limit
Figure 7.4a-2

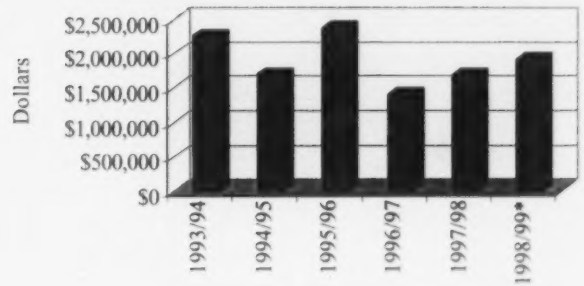


Reserve Ending Balance

The Community College Chancellor's Office monitors the fiscal health of the 71 districts and 106 colleges in the system. One of the indicators in this process is ending balance at the end of each fiscal year. In addition, the Chancellor's Office monitors the level of continuing salary increases given to staff and watches closely for deficit spending. Should the district drop below a 5% ending balance or exhibit practices that indicate commitments to expenditures greater than projected revenues, the district is held accountable. Ending cash balances of less than 3% will result in a monitoring system of district expenditures by the Chancellor's Office.

The Board of Trustees has established a reserve level which is 6% of state and local revenue. As the district budget grows the reserve level also increases. The reserve is established to be available for catastrophic occurrences such as sudden and unexpected decrease in enrollments or a major building loss. (see Figure 7.4a-3).

Reserve Ending Balance (1994-1999)
Figure 7.4a-3



*Estimated ending balance

Full-time to Part-time Faculty Ratio

The state goal is for each district to achieve a ratio of 75% full-time faculty to 25% part-time faculty. While the college has not yet reached this goal, its number of faculty exceeds the mandated FTEF requirement (see Figure 7.4a-4).

Full-time Equivalent Faculty

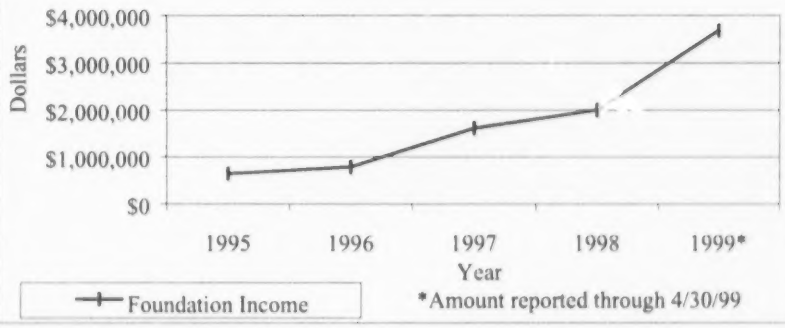
Figure 7.4a-4

Semester	Mandated	Actual
Fall 1996	93.03	100.91
Fall 1997	92.40	98.40
Fall 1998	121.40	125.70

Foundation Giving

Private gift support is an indicator of community loyalty and positive perception of Cuesta College. The college's results-oriented community collaborations, its ongoing nurturing and appreciation of volunteers, and the service of its own leaders on community boards and councils has resulted in increased support in both numbers of donors and dollars contributed to the college. The dramatic increase in donations is an indicator of Cuesta's high ranking in the community as well as its fiscal stability. The capital campaign feasibility study conducted in Fall, 1995 indicated that the community was ready to support the college's first capital campaign and indicated a willingness to provide leadership as well as an increased level of giving. This community support was the catalyst for launching a capital campaign designed to raise funds for the North County Campus and improve technology capability at both campuses. Figure 7.4a-5 reflects the continuing upward trend in private fundraising.

Cuesta College Foundation Income (1995-1999)
Figure 7.4a-5



Financial Aid Participation and Default Rate

Approximately 30% of Cuesta's students qualify for financial aid. Cuesta College continues to have one of the lowest default rates on student loans in the state. This is an important factor in that federal funding to the college is jeopardized if the default rate is excessive. (see Figure 7.4a-6).

Percentage of Borrowers in Default (1990-1997)
Figure 7.4a-6